

**Character sketch** is a short piece of writing that reveals or shows something important about a person or fictional character.

**Characterization** is the method an author uses to reveal characters and their personalities.

**Climax** is usually the most intense point in a story. A series of struggles or conflicts build a story or play toward the climax. (See "Plot line.")

**Comedy** is literature in which human errors or problems appear funny. Comedies end on a happy note.

**Conflict** is the problem or struggle in a story that triggers the action. There are five basic types of conflict:

- **Person vs. Person:** One character in a story has a problem with one or more of the other characters.
- **Person vs. Society:** A character has a problem with some element of society: the school, the law, the accepted way of doing things.
- **Person vs. Self:** A character has a problem deciding what to do in a certain situation.
- **Person vs. Nature:** A character has a problem with nature: heat, cold, a tornado, an avalanche, or any other element of nature.
- **Person vs. Fate (God):** A character must battle what seems to be an uncontrollable problem. Whenever the conflict is an unbelievable or strange coincidence, it can be attributed to fate or an act of God.

**Content** is the set of facts or circumstances surrounding an event or a situation in a piece of literature.

**Denouement** is the final resolution or outcome of a play or story.

**Dialogue** is the conversation carried on by the characters in a literary work.

**Diction** is an author's choice of words based on their correctness, clearness, or effectiveness.

- **Archaic** words are those that are old-fashioned and no longer sound natural when used, as "I believe thee not" for "I don't believe you."
- **Colloquialism** is an expression that is usually accepted in informal situations and certain locations, as in "He really grinds my beans."
- **Jargon** (technical diction) is the specialized language used by a specific group, such as those who use computers: *override*, *interface*, *download*.
- **Profanity** is language that shows disrespect for someone or something regarded as holy or sacred.
- **Slang** is the informal language used by a particular group of people among themselves; it is also language that is used in fiction to lend color and feeling: *awesome*, *chill out*, *no way*.
- **Vulgarity** is language that is generally considered crude, gross, and, at times, offensive. It is sometimes used in fiction to add realism.

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